

What is Love?

There are two striking definitions of love that we refer to again and again. Perhaps the most popular of the two is in Paul's letter to the Corinthians. Look up the passage and write it out here:

1 Corinthians 13: 4-8

Paraphrase the sonnet below in your own words. It does not have to be in poem form, but you may use the lines provided.

Sonnet 116

Let me not to the marriage of true minds

Admit impediments. Love is not love

Which alters when it alteration finds,

Or bends with the remover to remove:

O, no! it is an ever-fixed mark,

That looks on tempests and is never shaken;

It is the star to every wandering bark,

Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.

Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks

Within his bending sickle's compass come;

Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,

But bears it out even to the edge of doom.

If this be error and upon me proved,

I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

1. What is similar in the message and format of the two texts?
2. What is different in the message and format of the two texts?
3. Why do you think these texts are often used at weddings rather than some of Shakespeare's other sonnets and other Bible passages?
4. Look up "traditional marriage vows". What similarities do you see between the texts above and marriage vows?